Basic Writing Tips for Creating Knowledge Articles

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**Overview**

In composing knowledge articles, it is important for knowledge contributors to provide clear and concise content, because multiple end-users with varying experience levels will use this knowledge. To create an effective knowledge article, knowledge contributors must focus on keeping sentences short and to the point and avoiding too much jargon and language that the targeted audience cannot comprehend. If the audience cannot understand the content, they will be greatly misinformed.

Ultimately, writing clear and concise knowledge articles is essential in building a knowledge base that is valued by our customers. This Quick Reference Guide (QRG) will provide knowledge contributors with basic writing tips for creating effective knowledge articles in EpicCare.

**Related Links**

[Daily Writing Tips](http://www.dailywritingtips.com/rules-for-capitalization-in-titles/)

[Knowledge Article QA Checklist](https://epicorcs.service-now.com/kb_view.do?sysparm_article=KB0027497)

**Writing Tip Sheet**

Knowledge contributors are encouraged to use the tips in the following table when creating KB articles.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Item** | **Convention** | **Example** |
| Title | Capitalize the title/short description of the knowledge article:   * Capitalize the first letter of the first and last word * Capitalize the first letter of all principal words * Capitalize the first letter of all nouns, pronouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs * Lowercase articles (***a, an, the)***, prepositions **(at, in, of, to, into, by, with),**and coordinating conjunctions**(and, but, or)** * Do not use periods or exclamation points in the title   **Note**: *The title must be clear and concise. Also, omit using the words "how to" from the title.* | Incorrect: learning how to resolve the blue screen of death  Correct: Resolving the Blue Screen of Death Error    **Note**: *We follow the title case or up style method.  Please refer to*[*Daily Writing Tips*](http://www.dailywritingtips.com/rules-for-capitalization-in-titles/)*for additional information on this style.* |
| Writing level | Always use complete sentences when creating knowledge articles in EpicCare and write to the level of your targeted tier/ audience.  Do not assume the end-user or targeted audience completely understands the information. Include all relevant information/details.  When in doubt, don’t leave it out! | External customers  Tier 1 Support – Basic incident management  Tier 2 – Advanced incident management, problem and change management  Tier 3 – Development |
| Clear and concise knowledge | Provide clear and concise information. Avoid using too many words. | *Vague:*  *We made a decision to bring about a cancellation of the customer’s account.*    *Clear and concise:*  *We decided to cancel the customer’s account.* |
| Acronyms | When using acronyms, first spell out/define the term, followed by the acronym in parentheses. | *During the goal setting process, experts recommend that they should be****specific****,****measurable****,****attainable****,****realistic****, and****timely******(SMART)****.* |
| Troubleshooting and Resolution Steps | Provide all troubleshooting and resolution steps using a numbered list in chronological order. | 1. Open alert maintenance 2. Go to order processing 3. Go to RMA entry 4. Go to the events tab 5. Confirm the following information:  * New order equals yes |
| Step/Action formatting | Use commands at the beginning of every sentence.   Popular commands include:   * *Login* * *Click* * *Double-click* * *Right-click* * *Key* * *Review* * *Confirm* * *Select*   **Note**: *The verb “select” is used when choosing from a drop-down menu as opposed to clicking on buttons.*   * *Locate* * *Access* * *Use* * *Mouse over* * *Etc.* | * Confirm your username. * Key your password. * Click **Login**. * Click **Next** button * Click the **Our Company** hyperlink. * Mouse over the **Svcs** field. |
| If/Then Scenarios | Use if/then scenarios force the end-user to make a decision.  If/then scenarios are made up of two parts:   * Condition * Conclusion | *Is it raining outside?*   * *If****yes****, bring an umbrella.* * *If****no****, go wash the car.* |
| All keyed information (when a user is told to key-in information on a screen) | The info to be keyed in is bold; follow interface (write as displayed on screen).    **Note:**User input may be case sensitive. | Key **S8**. |
| Name of actions to be followed by user | Any actions to be followed as the user is bold; follow interface (write as displayed on screen). | * Click **Edit**, select **Copy**and then**Paste.** * Select **Track Changes** from the Tools menu.     OR     * Click **Tools**, select **Track Changes**. * Select **Track Changes** from the Tools menu. |
| Italics | Use italic formatting when referring to the title of another knowledge article. | Refer to the *2016 P21 Release Notes* for the latest system enhancements. |
| Names | Names of keys, screens, fields, codes, tabs, boxes, menus, forms, icons etc., are capitalized.    Follow interface (write as displayed on screen). | The **Maintenance Expiration** tab is used to confirm if the customer’s support contract has expired. |
| System or Error Messages | Follow interface (write as displayed on screen). | The following system message displays:Setup completed successfully. |